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The American Bureau of Shipping has no quarrel with the British nation or any of its organizations. We recognize the extraordinary solidarity of the British people as a most admirable quality, a solidarity that never fails in unitedly working for the benefit of Great Britain, a solidarity that has only seemed to fail in binding to the United Kingdom its other appanage, Ireland. Is it not time that the American people followed so good and efficient an example? Yield to British organizations, and it consistently follows that there will be neither an American Merchant Marine or any other great enterprise. What would the United States have become had they been governed by British organizations when the Declaration of Independence was written? Lest we forget the lessons of 1915-1917, when we had no ships with which to distribute either our products or our forces, we must always bear in mind that the United States can, more than ever, perform any duty assumed, provided a reasonable forethought be exercised, and if past accomplishments, despite all propaganda, mean anything to this nation, they mean that the nation must rely on its own organizations, not on foreign corporations, be they ever so old and competent.

STEVENSON TAYLOR.

New York City.

STRIKING AGAINST THE PUBLIC

SIR:

What are known as "public service corporations" often have real and serious grievances. For example, several urban traction companies in various cities recently complained of the unfair competition of jitney omnibus lines which the municipal authorities either established or at least authorized. For such complaints there were, beyond doubt, ample grounds.

Consider what that competition means. A trolley company makes a large investment in plant, practically all of which is immovable—tracks, power plants, car-sheds. It pays heavy franchise and other taxes. It is compelled to keep the streets well paved, and to clear them of snow in winter. It is required to run its cars with a certain frequency at all times, regardless of the weather and regardless of whether there is sufficient patronage to make the running of them profitable.

Then the omnibus drivers are permitted to compete with them, running their vehicles on the same streets with the cars. They make not one cent of permanent investment of any kind. They pay only a trifling tax, or license fee. They run practically as they please, getting the cream of business in the rush hours, and suspending operations whenever traffic is so light as to be unprofitable or when the weather is bad and the pavements slippery. Having no immovable property, they are free at any moment to quit the place and remove to some other city which promises better business. Such competition with chartered companies may be or may not be legal. Some courts seem inclined

to hold that it is not. It certainly is unfair and inequitable, and it is properly regarded by the trolley companies as a serious grievance.

Nevertheless, any such aggrieved corporation is ill-advised in seeking relief, solace, revenge, or what not, in striking against the public by suspending its service; for in so doing, it sacrifices the interests of an innocent and unconcerned third party, whose interests are paramount.

When the employees of a trolley company have a dispute with their employers and go on strike, we say that they have no right to interfere with the running of the cars for the accommodation of the public; that they have no right to sacrifice the welfare of the public in order to score against the company. So, with equal emphasis, it may be said that the company has no right to sacrifice the welfare of the public in order to score against a competitor. So long as it holds a public franchise and occupies public property with its lines, it is under a moral obligation, and certainly should be under a legal one, to serve the public needs. If it has grievances, the courts are open for redress.

J. H. P.

Norwich, Conn.

AMERICAN SCHOOLS

SIR:

Miss Hammond's article in the November number of the *REVIEW* on American schools is so strong and clear, and points to an ideal which should not be difficult to attain, that I am forced to write and congratulate you upon its publication. It contains the most constructive suggestions for the improvement of our schools I have ever seen.

CARL DREYFUS.

Boston, Mass.